

Today's News - Monday, March 23, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us Kuma in Kyoto and a Frog Queen (very cool) in Graz.
- Dyckhoff on Grand Paris plans: "enormously ambitious...the going will not be easy" (and a bit of history).
- Rochon on the end of "one-off, downtown follies; hello scaled-down poetry for the city's troubled edges."
- A similar note sung by Diamond re: the end of iconic "monuments to ego and extreme individualism": "There can be beauty in economy."
- Glancey says the surge in architecture course registration is a good sign: "when this recession ends, we'll have a newly invigorated public sector working hand-in-hand with a new generation of architects" (so stay optimistic).
- NYC's Design Excellence initiative is keeping an A-List of architects busy - including up-and-coming young guns.
- A sad ballad to the "hopelessness" on Liverpool's Hope Street: the pursuit of 'the quick buck now' signifies a relinquishing of a civic sense of history."
- Sacramento's Tent City homeless encampment is coming down, but should it?
- Speck walks Oklahoma City streets and finds they're not made for walking.
- A project in Texas is a poster child for an unintended effect of the stimulus package: encouraging sprawl.
- Most new buildings in urban areas of Viet Nam are not eco-friendly because of a shortage of laws on energy preservation.
- Kamin on Chicago's newest tower: while it may "come up short on the skyline," it more than makes up for it by its "city-friendly presence" on the waterfront.
- A modern makeover for Ottawa's historic Parliament Hill (but you won't even notice until you're inside).
- An eyeful of the winners in A New Infrastructure: Innovative Transit Solutions for Los Angeles competition.
- Calls for entries: CTBUH 8th Annual Best Tall Building Awards; 2009 Toronto Urban Design Awards; and Competitital: First Edifical Design Competition: design a universal waiting room for unemployed architects.
- We couldn't resist: Japanese architects condense an entire home into a 30-square-foot cube (we'll pass); and Mini and Airstream offer up a dream car/camper combo (we'll take it!).

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-- Kengo Kuma & Associates: Shiseikan, Kyoto University of Art and Design, Kyoto, Japan
-- Splitterwerk: Frog Queen, Graz, Austria

What is it about French politicians and architecture? Sarkozy unveils architectural schemes by some of the world's starriest architects for his Grand Paris plans...enormously ambitious...the going will not be easy. By Tom Dyckhoff -- Rogers, Stirk, Harbour & Partners; Roland Castro; Christian de Portzamparc; Antoine Grumbach; MVRDV; Jean Nouvel; AUC; Bernardo Secchi/and Paola Vigano- The Times (UK)

High time for a monumental rethink: Goodbye one-off, downtown follies; hello scaled-down poetry for the city's troubled edges...change-making architecture...is set to radically change. And it's about time...to help heal the disaffected suburbs. By Lisa Rochon -- Gehry; Piano; Foster + Partners; Rogers Stirk Harbour; Calatrava; Diamond + Schmitt; Libeskind; Nouvel; Roland Castro; Secchi/Vigano- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Op-Ed: Beauty in economy: Buildings that were conceived essentially as advertisements for a company or a museum or a city are now advertising an outdated and unfortunate ethic. We need new standards for beauty, one that is gratifying environmentally, technically and functionally. By Jack Diamond/Diamond and Schmitt Architects- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Intelligent designs: The building trade is struggling, yet architecture courses are more popular than ever before. It makes perfect sense...Perhaps...when this recession ends, we'll have a newly invigorated public sector working hand-in-hand with a new generation of architects and new forms of design...no matter how bad the job market is at the moment, architects need to remain optimistic. By Jonathan Glancey- Guardian (UK)

The A-Lists: Architects participating in New York City's Design and Construction Excellence Initiative become the go-to firms for a wide range of municipal jobs...As the downturn renews interest in public works and the program proves its own merits, getting on the list has never been more competitive. -- Karen Bausman; Polshek Partnership; Andrew Berman; Lyn Rice; Toshiko Mori; Smith-Miller + Hawkinson; Grimshaw; Marble Fairbanks; Viñoly; BKSK; Kiss + Cathcart; Rogers Marvel; ARO; Sage and Coombe; Arquitectonica; STV [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

How dare they do this to my Liverpool: The threat to some of the city's most beautiful buildings is typical of our disregard for history...The hopelessness on Hope Street signifies a relinquishing of a civic sense of history and long-term future in pursuit of..."the quick buck now". - Guardian (UK)

'Tent City' for Sacramento homeless coming down: A few miles from the state Capitol, on a pasture of land bounded by a railroad track and the tranquil American River, a large cluster of homeless men and women has settled...officials plan to close the encampment within the next few weeks and move residents to shelters, apartments, and other accommodations. [video]- Mercury News (California)

Oklahoma City streets not made for walking, design consultant concludes: ...city must make a dramatic change if it wants to compete for tomorrow's work force. -- Jeff Speck- The Oklahoman

Stimulus Ideals in Conflict on the Texas Prairie: A proposed toll road near Houston exemplifies an unintended effect of the stimulus: encouraging sprawl...an administration that opposes suburban sprawl is giving money to states for projects that are almost certain to exacerbate it.- New York Times

Survey finds builders continue to ignore energy-saving measures: Most new buildings in urban areas of Viet Nam are not eco-friendly...construction materials sold in the markets in Viet Nam are still not very environmentally friendly. One of the primary reasons for this situation is a shortage of laws...on energy preservation. -- Nguyen Tan Van/Viet Nam Architectural Association- Viet Nam News

New tower comes up short on the skyline, but is a boon to the cityscape: ...300 North LaSalle is not one of those earnest, visual bores that have spawned a backlash against the green movement...an excellent model for future waterfront development...while far from perfect on the skyline, shapes up as a...city-friendly presence, especially along the waterfront. By Blair Kamin -- Pickard Chilton; Kendall/Heaton [images]- Chicago Tribune

'The project of a lifetime': By mixing Gothic heritage with contemporary design and Canadian materials, the architects of the ambitious rethink of the West Block on Parliament Hill are drawing on similar successful European projects. -- Arcop; Fournier Gersovitz Moss Architects [images]- Ottawa Citizen (Canada)

A New Infrastructure: Innovative Transit Solutions for Los Angeles: Top schemes unveiled for SCI-Arc & AN's ideas competition -- Joshua G. Stein/Jacob M. Brostoff/Jaclyn Thomforde/Aaron Whelton; Fletcher Studio; Osborn; RSA; NBBJ; Tom Beresford; ODBC/Odile Decq; etc. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Call for entries: CTBUH 8th Annual Best Tall Building Awards; deadline: May 15- Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)

Call for entries: 2009 Toronto Urban Design Awards; deadline: May 19- City of Toronto

Call for entries: Competitital: First Edifical Design Competition: design a universal greenroom/waiting room for unemployed architects — a kind of universal holding pen or cosmic unemployment office; deadline: March 29- Edifical

Japanese architects condense an entire home into a 3-meter-cubed space: Jo Nagasaka and the Schemata Architecture Office have come up with a home design that rethinks just how much space one person needs. 6,000 square feet? 600? Well, try 30 square feet...the Paco home...in a crate... [images]- Sci-Fi Channel / DVICE

MINI And Airstream Team Up For Surfer-Spec Concept: ...the two cultural icons are about to present a one-off Clubman Cooper S and Airstream caravan designed by Republic of Fritz Hansen. [images]- The Motor Report

When Your New Job is to Find Your Next Job: Some practical suggestions for opening new doors of opportunities in difficult times. By Marjanne Pearson- ArchNewsNow

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